

## Action Points/decision from NIFF pre-meeting 30<sup>th</sup> January 2019

### Matters Arising/ Main Agenda items

#### i. Presentation of Inshore Strategy to Minister Creed

Copies of the Inshore Strategy Summary Document were printed and distributed to NIFF members and for presentation to the Minister at the afternoon meeting. BIM asked the NIFF how did they wish to disseminate the summary document to the inshore sector? It was suggested that the summary of the Inshore Strategy is sent to all under 12 m vessels owners through a mail shot and also have copies available at the Inshore Show in March, 2019. Vera O'Donovan, BIM was introduced to the NIFF members as the lead person to implement the strategy. The NIFF chair explained to the members that Vera has been very involved with the strategy since it's onset and welcomed her appointment as lead for the implementation of the strategy. The setting up of an implementation group will be the real catalyst to move the implementation along and get the available funding spent. She wanted strong input from the NIFF on the implementation of the strategy and to figure out the mechanics of how we draw down spending etc. **Action point:** BIM to get 2500 copies printed for mail shot and for dissemination at Inshore Show. The cover letter for the mail shot should be a letter from the NIFF to the inshore sector. The full Strategy document and the summary will be available online. It was also decided that following the presentation on the Inshore Fisheries Strategy to the Minister the NIFF chair would ask if he would be willing to launch the Inshore Strategy for the NIFF in the very near future.

#### ii. Inshore Forums renewal process, review of renewal procedure, TOR and code of conduct

NIFF secretary explained that an inshore section meeting with the RIFF secretaries had taken place on the 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2019 where the revised TOR, Code of Conduct and renewal procedure were discussed. Some minor changes were suggested and were incorporated into the documents which were distributed to the NIFF at the meeting and concerns from the RIFFs were discussed. The issue of conflict of interest was also raised and the need for a clear conflict of interest policy was noted. The NIFF chair outlined the conflict of interest policy in the QMAC and the conflict of interest declaration form. **Action point:** BIM are in the process of procuring a service provider for training for the RIFFs on governance, conflicts of interest, how to manage meetings etc. and will keep the NIFF informed as to when this training will take place.

#### iii. Crab closure in the BSA

The NIFF chair updated the NIFF members on the Crab closure in the BSA. She reported that the French have agreed a swap to cover the 21,000 kw days effort overshoot in 2018. This has put BSA crab effort on a level playing field for 2019. NIFF chair explained that at the industry crab effort meeting held in Cork in December 2018 that 19 vessels were represented, and they agreed to a voluntary closure for 3 months and scheduled the next meeting for the 9<sup>th</sup> of February. Despite this agreement from the industry meeting a Ministerial closure was implemented for the first three months of 2019. She went into detail on how this had occurred. At the following QMAC meeting in January she was informed that if the BSA crab

fishermen want to reopen the fishery in March 2019 they need to decide at the industry meeting scheduled for the 9<sup>th</sup> February. She noted that it is important to have a fisherman as well as a processor at the top table. The next hurdle is seeking enough effort from the big French swap to cover all the kw days of effort for 2019. Better management of KW days are required for all vessels. It was noted that more vessels are continuing to come into the fishery and the late submission of log sheets is still occurring. The question was asked: Would e-logbooks speed up the process? There is a Commission proposal to extend the requirements for e-logbooks and VMS to under 12m vessels in the future. NIFF representative to the SFPA Consultative Committee has flagged that a trial will be carried out. SFPA noted that e-logbooks books and VMS work well for single species fisheries but it is much more difficult for multi species fisheries. SFPA needs to escalate the pilot study. **Action Point:** NIFF chair to keep the NIFF members updated on any progress on the crab closure in the BSA.

**iv. SWRIFF Crayfish proposal**

The MI outlined this project which originated from NW Kerry Co-op and is proposing to tag and mark crayfish for conservation purposes and to give them legal protection through an SI in the SW only. It is equivalent to v-notching. It was noted that this proposal would not affect the other RIFF areas and it was not going to damage anyone economically. It will only run in Kerry to start but possibly could run as a pilot in other areas. NIFF secretary sent the proposal out to the RIFFs following the last NIFF meeting in December 2018. All the RIFFs have come back in support of the proposal. **Action Point:** Proposal to go forward to Minister Creed at the afternoon NIFF meeting.

**v. NE Scallop Proposal**

NE Scallop proposal was amended by the MI and recirculated following the last NIFF meeting held in December 2018 to all the RIFFs for consideration. There is unanimous support for this proposal. Previous SE RIFF amendments were taken onboard in the amended version. It was noted that Under Goals and objectives 2a should be removed from Version 1.1 text. MI noted that there is a gap in scallop data for the under 12 m sector. NE RIFF noted that it is a nice package to introduce trawling and dredging at the same time. **Action Point:** NE RIFF representative to update the Minister on the NE RIFF Scallop proposal.

**vi. Restrictions on trawling inside the 6nm limit**

The Minister decision to restrict trawling inside 6 nm was discussed and the following questions were raised: What is the legal basis of the restrictions being introduced? Will the decision become a Statutory Instrument? Precisely which types of trawl nets for vessels over 18m are affected by this decision? **Action Point:** NIFF to request update from Minister at their afternoon meeting.

**vii. Public Consultation on Quota Balancing for Demersal stocks**

The RIFFs all reported that this is a very complicated public consultation paper and that there is a lack of understanding of it in the inshore sector. The SFPA representative at the

meeting tried to explain the main points of the consultation. The biggest issue for the inshore sector seems to be where a vessel has a small quota and they overfish by a small amount they could end up being penalised by 30%. You are penalised for what you personally land and it would have a greater effect on smaller vessels with smaller quotas. If a larger vessel overshoots a large quota the vessels isn't affected to the same degree as a smaller vessel who overshoots by 10%. Once the National quota is gone the fishery is closed. **Action Point:** As the consultation period closes on the 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2019, the NIFF in their submission will look for an extension and request that someone from the Fishery Management section of the DAFM explain the consultation paper to them. NIFF secretary to write to Minister Creed seeking an extension to the public consultation.

viii. **Minimum landing size or brown crab**

**Action Point:** Minister to update NIFF on progress.

ix. **Proposal on Management of landing of Crab claws**

Following the last NIFF meeting in December 2018 the MI took the joint statement from the NIFF, KFO and IFPO and has developed it into a proposal. As there are a number of legal aspects to this proposal it has been sent to the IMG for consideration in the first instance before sending out to the RIFFs for consideration. MI briefed the NIFF on the proposal.

**Action point:** NIFF to wait until feedback is received on the proposal before circulated to the RIFFs for consideration.

x. **Proposal on derogation from prohibition of landing of lobsters over 127mm**

The North RIFF introduced their proposal on "Improved utilisation of 127mm stock by continuance of v-notching and some redistribution of v-notched 127mm stock" at the last NIFF meeting held in December 2018. The MI revised and added data to their proposal and the proposal was circulated to the RIFFs for consideration and comment in mid-January 2019. Of the RIFFs that had an opportunity to consider the proposal the NW RIFF stated they support the proposal but would also like to be covered by the derogation to be allowed to v-notch their lobsters over 127mm especially as Sligo will be impacted by the extra influx of v-notched lobsters being released by North RIFF in South Donegal. The West RIFF were not totally opposed but can see the proposal going countrywide. They also noted that they are still awaiting the data on the 127mm lobsters from BIM. The SE RIFF were prepared to support the proposal on the following basis: a.) the funding required for v-notching 127mm+ lobsters in the proposed area does not impact on or curtail the ability of normal v-notching (below 127mm) around the coast. b.) that such a measure be introduced only on the basis that it be reviewed and subsequently agreed annually (in light of the concerns or example expressed in point a) above. BIM stated that the funding should not be an issue. MI noted that the situation in Malin Head is a real exception as lobsters over the maximum size would not be protected if caught by NI registered vessels however they would be protected if v-notched. **Action Point:** As not all RIFFs had had the chance to consider the proposal and as the situation with Brexit is still very uncertain it was decided to delay this proposal until the next NIFF meeting proposed for April when we might know where we stand. This proposal

has also been sent to the IMG for consideration/comment. The proposal is to be brought to the Minister's attention at the afternoon meeting for his information.

**xi. Wind Turbines in the Irish Sea**

SE RIFF member briefed the NIFF on the scaling up of offshore wind farms into production status in the area of the Arklow bank. He only became aware of this after being informed by the local harbour master. This activity is also referred to on page 43 of the National Marine Planning Framework Baseline Report. The SE RIFF representative was very upset over the lack of notification and consultation with inshore fishermen. DAFM to update NIFF at the meeting with the Minister in the afternoon. It was noted that the licences for the wind farms were given by another government department and pre-dates a lot of the legislation in existence now. The NE RIFF is in a similar position when as they recently saw a notice in the newspaper. As a condition of their planning permission these wind farms were supposed to have a fishery liaison officer. **Action Point:** The issue of windfarms along the east coast to be brought up with the Minister and the DAFM.

**xii. Dundalk Bay Cockle Local Advisory Committee (LAC)**

NE RIFF Chair informed the meeting that the Dundalk LAC approached the NE RIFF to see if they could facilitate a meeting between the cockle fishermen and the DAFM regarding Northern Ireland vessels fishing Dundalk Bay cockles. **Action Point:** NE RIFF secretary to write to the DAFM requesting a meeting. Item does not need to go to the Minister.

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